

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Office Action mailed August 15, 2003. Claims 2, 6-9, 25 and 34 are cancelled without prejudice, and claims 1, 3, and 10-12 are amended. Claims 1, 3-5, 10-24 and 26-33 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

I. Allowed Subject Matter

Applicant's express their appreciation to the Examiner for allowing claims 13-24 and 26-33.

In addition, the Examiner indicated that dependent claims 7-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By way of the above amendments, independent claim 1 has been amended so as to incorporate each of the limitations of dependent claims 7-9, as well as those of the intervening claims. As such, it is believed that independent claim 1 is now allowable, as well as each of the claims depending therefrom, claims 3-5 and 10-12, and allowance is respectfully requested.

With respect to the remaining rejections, the corresponding claims have been cancelled without prejudice, and the remaining rejections now moot. Hence, it is believed that pending claims 1, 3-5, 10-24 and 26-33 are all now in a condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In light of the Amendments and the arguments set forth above, Applicants earnestly believe that they are entitled to a letters patent, and respectfully solicit the Examiner to expedite prosecution of this patent application to issuance. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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